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CLAIMS

1.   Hosting apparatus (1,3) for generating and storing profile information relating to client devices (2), comprising means for interrogating a client device, means for
5   generating a client device profile (92) based on the results of said interrogation, storage means (3) for storing client device profiles so generated, means for generating reference codes (93) identifying the stored client device profiles (92) and transmitting said reference codes to the respective client devices (2), the storage means (3) being arranged to retrieve the profile (92) of a client device (2) on receipt,
10 from a data accession device (4), of a data request (22) including the reference code (92) relating to that client device (2), wherein the interrogation means comprises means for transmitting a diagnostic program (90) to the client device (2), and means for activating the diagnostic program and analysing inputs received from the client device (2) to generate the client device profile (92).
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2.   Apparatus according to claim 1, comprising means for causing a client device (2) to transmit the said reference code (93) as part of data requests (20) made to data accession devices (4).

20 3.   A data access terminal having means for generating a client device profile, comprising diagnosis means for determining properties of the terminal and/or of its user, means for generating a client device profile derived from the said properties, means for transmitting the client device profile to a store associated with a host server, means for receiving from the host server an address from which the client
25 device profile can be retrieved, and means for making a data request to a database in which the said address is transmitted with the data request to allow the database to retrieve the client device profile from the store, the diagnosis means comprising a diagnostic program (90) loaded onto the terminal (2), and means for activating the diagnostic program to generate a client device profile (92) and means for transmitting
30 the client device profile to a host server.

4.   A method of generating profile information relating to client devices, comprising the steps of interrogating the client for its capabilities, generating a

profile, storing the profile in a database, and generating a reference code for transmission to the client to allow retrieval of the relevant profile, comprising the step of transmitting a diagnostic program to the client device, activating the diagnostic program at predetermined times, and generating the client device profile from the
5   results of said diagnosis..

5.   A method according to claim 6, comprising the step of retrieving rthe profile information from the database in response to a data request incorporating the reference code,
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6.   A method according to claim 4 or claim 5, comprising the step of causing a client device to transmit the said reference code as part of data requests made to data accession devices.

15 7.   A process for generating a client device profile for a data access terminal, wherein a diagnostic program is loaded onto the terminal and activated so as to perform a diagnosis process to determine properties of itself and/or of its user, generates a client device profile derived from the said properties, the terminal transmits the client device profile to a store associated with a host server, and
20 receives from the host server an address from which the client device profile can be retrieved, and when the data access terminal makes a data request to a database, the said address is transmitted with the data request to allow the database to retrieve the client device profile from the store,

25 8.   A computer program product or suite of computer program products for use with one or more computers to carry out the method as set out in any one of claims 4 to 7 or to provide any of the apparatus as set out in any one of claims 1 to 3.